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A REPROOF FROM THE LORD: DECLARED

By the Movings of his Spirit to certain Professors, whose habitations is in and about *Hull* and *Beverley*, who take delight in approaching to God, and to know his wayes, as a people that did Righteousness, and yet seeks to limit him, and stumbles at his light, in which the knowledge of his wayes is received: With an admonition to all to beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie, who for a pretence, make long Prayers, whilest iniquity is regarded in the heart, and disobedience lived in, lest you receive greater Damnation.



AS ALSO,
AN INVITATION to all, who are groaping in the dark, to own the light in which the Pearl is found, which gives strength against sin, and rest to the soul; Published for the information of such as desire to know the Truth, and would enter into the Kingdom, were they not deceived by the sleights of men, who shut up the way, and will neither enter themselves, nor suffer those that would to go on, That you may try all things, and hold fast that which is good.

By one that seeks not his own, but the good of your souls, called, *Iohn Whitehead*.

Hear ye, and give ear, be not proud; for the Lord hath spoken, &c. Jer. 13. 14.

London, Printed for *Thomas Simmons*, at the sign of the Bull and Mouth near *Aldersgate*. 1656.

(2) A Reproof from the Lord.

THis ensuing Letter was I moved to write and send amongst you (who were met together at Hassel upon the 31 day of the fifth moneth 1656.) in love to your souls, as a testimony against your deceits, which to your wisdom may otherwise appear, to which eye I look not to be made manifest, knowing it perceives not the things of God; Therefore do I exhort all of you to whom it shall come, to read what follows, without any prejudice in the fear of the Lord, that your understandings may be opened, in the light, to see and know the minde of the Spirit which will give to each of you what is your portion.



Friends, consider how you are puffed up in your knowledge, and your hearts waxen fat, and your eyes blinded by the god of the world, and ears become dull of hearing, that you cannot favour the things of God, nor rejoyce in the truth, but accounts Jesus Christ preached, (the light of the world, who in lightneth every man that cometh into the world) a fancie, and foolishness, or simpleness, to what you have attained, though few of you knows any thing of the fellowship of his sufferings, power of his Resurrection, or virtue of his Life made manifest in you, but have

gotten the report and fame thereof to talk of, and in your prudence and comprehensions are prescribing a way, and seeking to limit the Holy One in it, witness your agreeing beforehand who shall speak, and rejecting the truth in others, and taking your turns by an outward Order of habitation in such a place, witness your own words, who said, *it is now Beverley turn*; and also your agreeing before-hand on particular things to be prayed for, as by your own words plainly appeared, and going to prayer at the call of one another, though some of you acknowledged you had no freeness in spirit to it: All which is seen to be contrary to the doctrine of Christ, and practice of his Saints, who spake and played as the Spirit moved, and gave utterance, and knew not before-hand what they should pray for, (as you do) but having received the first fruits of the Spirit, it helped their infirmities, and made intercession according to the will of God, with sighings and groanings that could not be uttered, which spirit you have sufficiently cleared your selves of, some of you saying that you want it, others that you cannot finde it, but prayes much of your selves, and stubbers over Gods sacrifices, and knows not his mind, but are in much darkness and deadness, contradiction and strife, and not being come to the unitie of the Body of Christ, imagines it to be like your selves, *rent and divided*, (as some of you said) who contradicts one another, even you who profess to be the Mouth of the rest, some of you saying, *That you want the Spirit, and cannot finde it, but are in much darkness*, others of you speaking in behalf of the rest, affirms, *That you have it, and are Gods children, and does his work, which proves some of you at least, to be Lyes*: And notwithstanding you are thus in confusion and darkness, (as might be mentioned in many other particulars) you are not ashamed to speak in decision and contempt of the Children of light, because we all speak the same things, and declares one truth, according

r. I. 21.
8. 23. 26.

r. I. 10.

to the Apostles Doctrine, which truth is the ground of union, and stands a witness against all deceit, the declaring of which you have contemned; because it came contrary to your wills and appointments, and doth not feed that which reacheth out to the tree of knowledge, which is disobedient, and like the Athenians, cryed out for some new thing, and you would hear it, but accounted it babling, and a disturbance, to declare that which was from the beginning, carping at the manner of words, and time of their delivery, though they varied not from examples and rules in Scripture, which saith, Cry aloud, * spare not, and shew my people their sins, and that which you have heard in the cave declare on the house-top, which you accounted a heynous thing, and the fruits of an unmeek spirit † saying, that I would make the Spirit by which I spoke odious, by speaking in the time of your (long) prayers, though the Scriptures say, If anything be revealed to one that sits by, let the first hold his peace; and read Elijah and Baalls Prophets, and you may see your selves as in a figure, and an example for speaking in the time of Prayer, and how like in effect your indirect crying is to theirs, which the Prophets witnessed against, and how far different both pray, whilst you and your Prayers is from Christs Doctrine, and the Saints practice, let his light in waited for your consciences judge, and your Heathen-like much speaking in your Prayers, witness against you, as also your breaking out into a confused uproar, many speaking together to stop the declaring of Truth, and not rendring a moderate reason of your sayings, contrary to the Apostles rule, Let your moderation be known unto all men, and try all things, and hold fast that which is good, which ye refused to do, and being lifted up in your knowledge, proved as he accounts it a needles thing to lay amongst you the foundation of Repentance from dead works, though you be even found therein, as the light of Christ in all your consciences will witness, which shews you your secret lust, pride, and high-mindedness, covetousness, love, and conformity to this world, as also your respect of persons, anger, and peevishness, with your false accusing, deriding, foolish laughter, wantonness, and so forth, which dead works and your saying that you have not power against them, is a greater testimonie of your unbelief, and disowning of Christ, then all your profession of Faith in him, and talking of his excellency in words can be for you, which profession and fair saying is nothing but hypocrisie, whilst you do not the things you say, and the hope you have in that nature is not sure and stedfast, but must be cut off, and perish, and you also, except you repent; and this shall you witness to be truth declared in plainness, when the worker of iniquity from Christ is forced to depart, and rewarded according to the deeds done in the Body, and those onely who have done the Fathers will enters into the Kingdom. A warning may this be to all that mentions the name of the Lord Iesus Christ, not any longer to deceive your selves with a vain hope that purifies not, neither let any deceive you with vain words, but believe in the light of the Lord Iesus, and singly wait, that therein you may receive power for obedience to the Faith, and put away the evil of your doings, and the abominations that are in your hearts, which shuts out your prayers, that they pass not through, but you ask and receive not, desire to have, and have not, (because you ask amiss, to consume it on the lust of your own wills, which is not subjected in the Cross,) and although there does a joy arise in some of your affections, at the uttering forth of words that makes mention of the thing you want, which joy for a time you may feed on, yet anon it withers and fades away, and you are but where you were before, at a loss in your selves, sticking fast in the mire and clay, and bondage, to the corruption and evil of your hearts, & not believing in the light which opens the blinde eye, you know not where to finde the power which should slay the enmity, and crucifie the flesh with the affections and lusts, but

but are struggling and striving by what you can do to enter, often pleading your actions before the Lord, and filling your mouths with Arguments to perswade him to accept your indeavours and prayers, which are seen to be exacted labours, and a forced work performed in the strength of the natural understanding and wisdom, by vvhich you know not God, nor his minde, but have a zeal not according to knowvledge (from vvhich ariseth many deceitfull vvorkings, as feigned cryings, and the like) in vvhich you call for fire from heaven, not knowving of vvhat spirit you are.

But the Lord who searcheth all hearts, and knows your intents, hath shut out your wisdom from knowing him or his way; and to touch of the Tree of life you cannot come by all your climbing, turning and striving; the flaming sword being set to keep its way, you cannot pass through to feed on it, whilst you live in that nature and wisdom wherein pride, strife and every evil work lodgeth; but before you have a right to the tree of Life must become fools, and cast down your Crowns at the feet of Christ, who lighteth every man that comes into the world, and own his Witness, who hath kindled a burning under your glory, and testifies of your works that they be evil; in whose Light stand you still, and you will see condemnation upon all your ovvn vvilling, and running, and acting in your ovvn strength, as also upon all your vvickedness, and self-righteousness, vvhich are both abomination to God, and a profession of faith, and talk of Christ and his Kingdome to come, vvill not serve to cover you that are found therein, and vvill not that the Lamb shal reign over you in spirit, that humbled himself to the Cross, whose appearance you cannot own, nor the glory thereof, which is not the glory of this world, nor of the Princes of this world, which shall come to nought, but stands in righteousness, judgment, purity, and in this world suffering, and reproaches, whipping, and imprisonment in Dungeons, and holes, to be numbred amongst Transgressors, buffeted, stoned, spit upon, and accounted a Devil, a Deceiver, &c. even by such as have gotten the *Scriptures* (which testifies of him) to talk of, and yet in all these things the Lamb reigneth and shall reign till all rule and authority be put under him, though I say his appearance and glory in this world can no more be owned by such as look for an outward kingdom, power and dominion, and in the mean time lives in pride, fashions and lust of the world, then it could by the **Jews**, who looked for his appearance in an outward pomp, and for an outward restoration of their kingdom, & when he appeared did not know him, nor the voices of their own Prophets, but fulfilled them in crucifying him, who was not born by the wil of man, nor appeared according to their expectation and thoughts of him; and how like your thoughts and expectations of his appearance are unto theirs let his Light in your consciences judge, the which you may do well to take heed unto, untill he be manifest, who brings to light that which hath layen hid in darkness, and makes known the Counsels of the heart, Then will you cease from all outward expectations of his coming; Loe here, and loe there, and know his Kingdome to be within, and feel the Scepter of it, which is Righteousness, smiting at the feet of that glorious Image, which in your Comprehensions is set up, but must be dashed in pieces by the Stone cut out of the Mountain without hands, which is stumbled at, set at nought and rejected of your builders, as being the light

light the world; that lighteth every one that comes into the world; which light declared, you account a low mean thing, and a fancy, or some thing that is insufficient to salvation, without a further light. But this I say unto you, and testifie in the Lord, that his height you cannot comprehend, who is far above all powers of darkness, and was from the beginning with God, by whom all things was made and do consist, whose name is called the Word of God, which is the life and light of men shining in darkness (though thereby not comprehended) which was testified in due time, and became flesh and dwelt amongst the Saints, and they beheld his glory as of the only begotten Son of God, and what they heard and saw, they Witnessed forth, and we know that their witness is true, who testified of him that he is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and there is not any besides him that makes manifest the deeds of darkness, or can lead out therefrom: So all that expect or hold out another light then that which lighteth every man, and deny its sufficiency, are in the fancy, exalted and puffed up in their knowledge and wisdom, with which they know not the Scriptures, nor the power of the Lord Iesus Christ, who is the light of the world, sufficient to lead out of darkness, for he that follows him, shall not abide therein, but have the light of life; and here is the stone which the builders reject, made the head of the corner; and is a precious sure foundation to all them that believe and walk in his light, who are witnesses of the vertue of his blood (which by vain talkers is made a cloak for sin) washing and cleansing from all sin, & of his fulness, who is able to save to the uttermost, have we received power to become the sons of God, in that obedience and righteousness which is perfect; where all that be found are justified, which righteousness is revealed from faith to faith, in all them that believe in the light which manifests and condemns sin in the flesh, with which light, all you that stumble at it, are seen to come short of the righteousness of God, which makes a man righteous, and are shut out of the Covenant of grace, and light wherein salvation, and the power against sin is placed; yet left without excuse in that, light is come into the world, lighting every man (and you say you see) in which light the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, and there is your condemnation that abide in darkness, that light is come, and grace hath appeared, in which power against sin is freely tendered, and yet darkness rather loved, and lived in, because of evil deeds, and the free grace of God into wantonness, is turned by all of you that live in the ungodliness, and follow after the worldly lusts (which the Saints are taught to deny.) And you are the murmurers, complainers, and slothfull servants, which foolishly would charge the fault upon God, as though he did not draw nor give power against sin, when as he hath freely given him for a witness to the people, in whom all power and fulness dwells, and by his spirit hath striven with you ever since you began to yeeld the members of your bodies servants to unrighteousness, for which you have often been checked in secret, and felt the spirit moving to purity, contrary to your wills; but how often ye have resisted the holy spirit, and quenched his motions, let the light of your consciences judge, ye stiffnecked, and uncircumcised in hearts and ears? how will you be able to stand when the Lord shall visit upon you the evil of your doings, who have a form of godliness, but denies the power which overcomes sin; how deeply are you fallen into the Enemies snare, who

John 1.

John 8. 21.

1 Pet. 2. 4.

Psa. 118. 22.

1 John 1. 7.

John 3. 19, 2

Titus 2. 11.

1a. 55. 2, 3

Acts 7. 51.

ownes his power to keep you in sin, and cannot see nor own the spirit and power of God, that would lead you out from it, though it be a Reprover of you, my soul even laments your captivity? how is the whole Head become sick, and the whole heart faint? how are you scattered in your imaginations, and driven from mountain to hills, which be dry and barren? how is your beauty and glory withered, and your wise men gone backward, and their knowledge become foolishness, and their language confounded? How do you reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man? how are you groping in the dark to finde him whom your souls longs after? how do your eyes fail, whilst your expectations are without, looking for glorious dayes, and a power to come, but when you know not, but as you imagine and conceive, from the promises written in Scripture, which imaginations and conceivings blindes the eye (that should apply the promises to their right object) and leads the minde outward into groundless hopes, which are mixed with doubt and uncertainties; and whilst you follow such blinde guides as your imaginations and conceivings, which arise from the earthly wisdom, which knows not the things of God, you often fall into the ditch, and are defiled by the pollutions of the world; and thus compassing your selves about, with the sparks you have kindled, are forced to lye down in sorrow.

And now a word to all amongst you who sit weeping by the Rivers of Babylon, and have honest desires after God and his righteousness, whom my bowels yearne over, and sounds towards you, that you may not any longer be tossed with the sleights of men, nor feed on their airy Notions, which gives you not the least strength against sin, but draws out your minds without, to look at Christ at a distance from you, and his appearance in power to come hereafter, though he be near unto every one of you, reprovng in the gate or door of your hearts, whereat the minde goes forth into vanity, even, as saith the righteousness which is of faith. The Word is neare you in your hearts, and in your mouths, the Word of Faith which we preach, and this is the same Word which was from the beginning, preached by the Apostles, and witnessed to be living and abiding forever, ingrafted and able to save the soul; and this is it which discerns the thoughts and intents of your hearts, and bears witness against every vain thought, idle word, and froward ungodly way, which your own wills that are not free, but bound to vanity, chuseth; therefore from your own wisdom, labours and self-works (which be all wicked) cease; and stand still in the Light of that engrafted Word, (of which the Scriptures testifie) which is able to save your souls; so may your blind eyes be opened, and you brought into a true sense of your conditions, to see how you have walked in unpleasant places; and that notwithstanding all your knowledge and profession, all is not right in the inward, but corruption still lodgeth in the heart as a Partition-Wall, separating you from God; and to do good of your selves have no understanding nor ability, but for ever might have perished in this state, if God in his everlasting love had not given his son a light into the world to manifest and lead out of this darkness. So in the Light (which shews you sin and inability in self to come out of it) wait, and you will feel in your selves the sentence of death and condemnation upon the first man, which is of the earth, earthly; and by the operation of Gods power which is manifest in the light, you will feel desires begotten and moving in your souls after righteousness, which motions

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tions is the Fathers drawing in his love that you may not perish, but come unto Christ which is the light and life; and this is the will of God which begets by the word of truth both to will and do, according to his good pleasure: Therefore beware of continuing in stiff neckedness, lest you be found fighters against God, and resisters of his will, as they are who perish in their sin; but while it is called to day, hear him that speaks from heaven, whose voice shakes the heavens and the earth, who is the good shepherd, & calls unto you that have gone astray; therefore harden not your hearts, but wait in spirit to hear and know his voice who testifies against all sin and calls after him out of the conformity and love of this world and whosoever will be his disciples, must sell all, deny themselves, and take up his cross daily and in obedience follow him: This is that which you yet want, and makes the difference between you and us, and is the ground of the enmities standing, and sin prevailing over you; therefore who amongst you is weary and heavy laden therewith, and would be his disciples, consult not with flesh and blood, nor give way to that nature which stumbles at the cross, and seeks to save its own life in the delights and pleasures of the flesh; and to keep in the union, love and unspiced friendship of the world, which is enmity to God, and whosoever will be its friend, is Gods enemy; profess what you will that love the world, the love of the Father is not in you; therefore do not love it, nor the things that be in it, neither fear any outward losses nor suffering that you shall meet with in your separation from your former companions, nor the frowns nor oppositions of men, for if you count any thing too dear to part with, that you may win Christ, you are not worthy of him; but let self (in which the inability to do good lodgeth) be wholly denied by you, and take up the daily cross to your wills and lusts, that wars against your souls, which cross is the power of God in all that are saved, which crucifies to the world, and taking it up, and enduring of it, you will come to witness the flesh crucified with its affections and lusts, and the Partition-wall broken down, and that which lets taken out of the way by the Lamb of God, in whom dwelleth the fulness both of wisdom and power, which together with him is freely given to all that ask not amiss, but waits in spirit to know him revealed, and his life through death made manifest, which opens the mystery that hath been hid from ages, Christ in you the hope of glory, who is greater then he that is in the world, and gives victory and dominion over it, as it was in the beginning, and this salvation is witnessed and freely is tendered unto you in the Covenant of Light, Life and Power, in which waiting to learn of him who is meek and low in heart; his holy arm you will come to see not shortned that it cannot save, but stretched out to take you by the hand, & lead you by a way that you have not known, in which you will come to see the wonders of the Lord, and the works of his hands brought forth out of bondage to corruption, and possess the life of that which you profess in words.

Ezek. 33.
11. James
1. 10.

Phi. 2. 13.

Heb. 12. 25
26.

Mark 10.
21.

Iam. 4. 4.
Ioh. 2. 15

Matt. 10.
37, 38.
Luk. 9. 23.
1 Cor. 1. 8.

Col. 1. 27.
1 Ioh. 4. 4.

Now

Now being warned, take heed of hardning your hearts against the Lord by continuing in sin, and resting in the outward knowledge of these things from what you have read in Scriptures, for that is not as you ought to know them, which if you do, your visitation will pass over, and the Spirit of the Lord cease striving, by which he would sanctifie and gather you into his fold; and then will the things belonging to your peace be hid from your eyes, and you shall desire to see one of the dayes of the Son of man and shall not see it; and though you be not gathered yet shall he be glorious, and the Gentiles will hear his salvation, and many shall come from the East, West, North and South, and sit down together in the Kingdom of God, and your selves shall be shut out who wil not hear. So he that hath an ear let him hear, and come forth, for the time is now at hand; and I am clear of your blood at that day, who in love to your souls have sent you a warning, commending it to your consciences in the sight of God, where I look to be made manifest when the book is opened, and till then am willing to bear your reproaches, and be accounted your enemy for declaring the truth.

Gen. 6. 3.
 Act. 28. 28
 2 Cor. 4. 2
 3. & 6.

The 14 day of the 6 moneth, 1636.

The End.



